



# Pickens County First Steps Partnership *Fiscal Year 2008 Annual Report*

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**Executive Director:**  
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**Total children in county under  
age 6: 7,727**

**Children under age 6 living in  
poverty: 4.8%**

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## **Pickens County Highlights**

- 60 families had 949 home visits
- Childcare centers improved their quality
- Partnerships collaborated to improve school readiness

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE**

Pickens County First Steps has worked diligently over the past near decade to prepare children ages 0-5 in our county to begin first grade healthy and ready to learn. We have done so with the utmost of efficiency, accountability, and with high integrity for results.

This year has proven to hold fast to those commitments to children and their families. The impact data collected in Pickens clearly reveals that our First Steps initiative is accomplished and is making a difference for our youngest citizens. Many families have been strengthened with GEDs, improved literacy skills, and children with delays are now functioning well; four-year-olds are enjoying excellent, high quality preschool and increasing emergent literacy skills; and several childcare centers have raised the bar on the quality of care they are providing.

Our Board is pleased that all our program vendors and specialists have given their best 100% of the time to the implementation of research-based practices in the field of early childhood care and education. More families need our services, however, so we must continue to meet the needs of our expanding and restructuring county workforce by laying a strong foundation for children before they arrive at school.

Sincerely,  
Marilyn Madden  
Executive Director  
Pickens County First Steps

## **First Steps to School Readiness Strategy Areas**

*The First Steps initiative approaches children's school readiness needs in five ways:*

**Family Strengthening:** A parent is a child's first and best teacher. First Steps works to help parents become the best parents they can be. First Steps also helps parents further their own education.

**Healthy Start:** Children's development and ability to learn are profoundly impacted by their health in the earliest years. First Steps works to help families understand children's health needs through education and screenings while also working to help them access needed health services.

**Quality Child Care:** Quality child care provides immediate and long-term learning benefits for children. First Steps works to expand the availability of quality child-care to families and to enhance the level of quality in existing child-care environments.

**Early Education:** Research shows that children who participate in high-quality preschool classes are more likely to start school ready to learn, as well as be more successful later in life. First Steps works to expand high-quality 3-year-old and 4-year-old kindergarten opportunities in public and private settings.

**School Transition:** The transition into kindergarten is a critical time that sets the tone for children's perspectives about the school years, as well their parents' perspectives. Making a strong initial connection between school and home -- and supporting both parents and students during this transition time -- has been shown to impact students' later school success and parents' later involvement during the school years.

## **2007-08 County Partnership Programs by Strategy**

### **FAMILY STRENGTHENING**

Parents as Teachers

#### **Program description:**

School District-based parenting and family strengthening program combined with Family Literacy to provide Parents as Teachers to qualified target families in need of parenting skills whose children are ages 0-5 and at risk for school readiness deficiencies. Full-time trained Parent Educators provide weekly home visits and monthly workshops to qualified participating families to improve quality of parenting skills, child interactions, and emergent literacy skills for families and children.

#### **Program results:**

- 60 at-risk families were served
- 81% of these families met the requirements for pre and post KIPS assessments
- 100% of families with pre and post KIPS assessments had improved scores by .53

- 30% of participant adults and children met the requirements for pre and post ACIRI assessments
- 100% of participant adults and children with pre and post ACIRI assessments had improved scores by .64
- 83% of these families met the frequency requirement for visits
- 98% of these families met the duration requirement for visits
- 949 home visits were conducted
- 2.5 visits exceeded the monthly average visit requirements

KIPS is the *Keys to Interactive Parenting Scale* and ACIRI is the *Adult-Child Interactive Reading Inventory*.

## **FAMILY STRENGTHENING**

### Family Literacy

#### **Program description:**

The family literacy program will provide comprehensive services offering families' adult education, childcare for children three and under, parenting home visits and group meetings, and ILA (interactive literacy activities between parent and child). The family literacy program will provide transportation and childcare as needed as well as provide breakfast and lunch and make referrals as needed to other resource agencies in Pickens County.

#### **Program results:**

- 23 at-risk families were served
- 5 out of 6 adults working toward a GED earned it
- 100% of these families had PPVT gains of 1.2 levels
- 100% of these families had TABE improvement in math, reading, and language by 1.6 grade levels
- 100% of these families had BEST Plus scores that indicated average gains of 2.2
- 100% of these adults had gains in at least 1 of the 4 scales on the PEP

PPVT is the *Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test*, TABE is the *Test of Basic Education*, *BEST Plus* is the measure of language competency and PEP is the *Parent Education Profile*.

## **QUALITY CHILD CARE**

### Childcare Leadership Training Institute (CCLTI)

#### **Program description:**

CCLTI is an onsite technical assistance program to Registered or Licensed childcare centers that need hands-on assistance to enhance quality of care for preschool aged children. A certified and qualified Technical Assistant provided guidance based on

baseline ERS scores to childcare centers over the course of 12 months. The goal is to work systemically with the center to improve quality and raise ERS scores to a rating of Good or 5 on the scale.

**Program results:**

- 3 childcare centers were served
- 100% improved by 1.07 levels on pre and post ERS scales
- 100% of center classrooms achieved a 5 or Good ERS scale rating

ERS is the *Environment Rating Scales* assessment ranking Inadequate, Minimal, Good, and Excellent with regard to classroom environment and interaction quality

## **EARLY EDUCATION**

Half-Day Public 4K

**Program description:**

Public Half-Day 4K provided to a minimum of 72 children and a maximum of 80 children specific to all Office of First Steps 4K guidelines and criteria. Two Early Childhood Certified teachers and their 2 assistants will provide half-day 4K to at risk children in underserved areas of Pickens County under contract with the School District of Pickens County

**Program results:**

- 75 at-risk children were served
- 100% of at-risk families received the required home visits
- 100% of these families participated in our integrated Book Flood emergent literacy program
- 100% of these children met standards and progressed to 5K

## **EARLY EDUCATION.**

Book Flood/Reach Out and Read

**Program description:**

Book Flood is a combination of Reach Out and Read (ROR) where medical providers gift books to qualified children at a well-child visits and Book Flood which is a systematic program of integrating early literacy read-aloud books to public and private 4K classrooms across the county.

**Program results:**

- 883 at-risk children were served
- 75% of at-risk families increased the number of nights they read aloud to their 4K child
- 94% of at-risk families stated that they were better off because of the Book Flood program

- 3800 books were given out to children on doctor's visits in the ROR program

## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

<b><u>Expenditures By Funding Source</u></b>	
State Appropriation ( <i>Fund 10</i> )	\$324,234.00
E.I.A. Appropriation ( <i>Fund 55</i> )	\$19,557.00
Lottery Appropriation ( <i>Fund 35</i> )	\$10.00
C.D.E.P.P. Appropriation ( <i>Fund 60</i> )	\$0
C.O.E. Appropriation ( <i>Fund 65</i> )	\$0
N.F.P. Appropriation ( <i>Fund 70</i> )	\$0
State Private ( <i>Fund 15</i> )	\$719.00
Local Private ( <i>Fund 20</i> )	\$4,711.00
Federal ( <i>Fund 30</i> )	\$0
In-Kind ( <i>Fund 25</i> )	\$72,213.00
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$421,444.00</b>

<b><u>Expenditures by Program/Strategy Name</u></b>	
Parents As Teachers	\$152,072.00
Family Literacy	\$38,559.00
Other Family Literacy	\$19,982.00
4K	\$129,192.00
Child Care Quality Enhancement	\$42,693.00
Indirect Programmatic Functions	\$20,058.00
Administrative Functions	\$18,888.00
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>	<b>\$421,444.00</b>

## NOTABLE DONORS

<b><i>DONOR'S NAME</i></b>	<b>AMOUNT</b>
United Way of Pickens County	\$5,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>

**Pickens Local Match Percentage for FY 2008:** 24.1% (at least 15% Legislative requirement)

## **COUNTY PARTNERSHIP BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Category</b>
Bridgman, Michelle	Parent of Pre
Brink, Courtney	Parent of Pre
Bagwell, Beth	Faith
Bowers, Chris	Transportation
Bowers, Randy	Leg. Appt.
Canas, Adriana	Family Edu.
Cassell, Jason	Business
Corn, Sharon	Head Start
Childers, Susan	PreK Edu.
Clamp, Harriett	Leg. Appt.
Dow, Amanda	Leg. Appt.
Jones, Jane	School District
Hopkins, Sheryl	DHEC
Lewis, Carlton	ECE
Linkenhoker, Kevin	Healthcare
Frazier, Keith	DSS
Steadham, Cheryl	Family Edu.
Stegelin, Dee	ECE
Stephens, Margaret	Healthcare
Nations, Cortni	Non-Profit
Vest, Melinda	Library
Walters, Carol	Leg. Appt.
Marchbanks, Shelly	Childcare
Young, Kathy	Childcare

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## **COUNTY DATA SNAPSHOT**

In FY08, First Steps County Partnerships statewide made it a priority to become increasingly data-driven. County Partnerships successfully began using powerful new components of the First Steps data system, and County Partnerships also utilized data in new ways to drive their FY09 program plans. In addition to enhanced program data tracking, County Partnerships are also focusing on the best available data about children and families to best understand their communities' needs. At the end of FY08 and the beginning of FY09, County Partnerships began an extensive analysis of this data, including data about the risk factors known to impact children's potential school success, such as low birth weight, teen mothers, and families living in poverty. A county-level risk data report is included in the subsequent pages of this report

# 2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

# Pickens County

Total Children Under Six: 7,727

## CHILD POVERTY (Children in Families Receiving TANF Benefits)

Statewide Average (2007): 8.4%

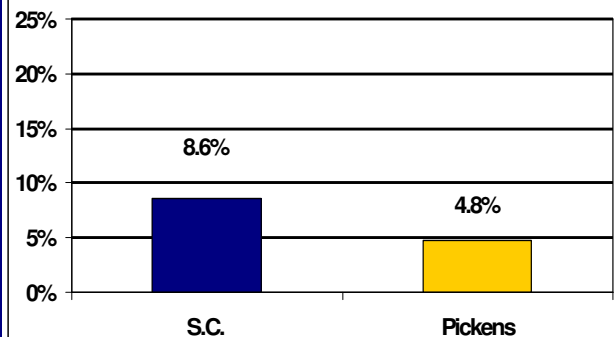
Pickens County (2007): 4.8%

***Fast Fact:*** Roughly 1 in 20 Pickens County children has an annual family income equivalent to \$10,325 (or less) for a family of four. A recent statewide analysis suggests that 45% of these children will be retained or score at the “below basic” level (PACT) by third grade.

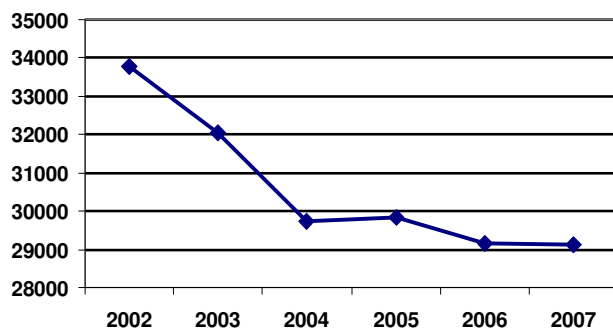
Children in deep poverty often face a wide variety of school readiness obstacles, ranging from inadequate prenatal care and nutrition to low maternal education.

372 of Pickens County’s 7,727 children under age 6 received federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits during 2007, indicating a family income at or below 50% of the federal poverty definition.

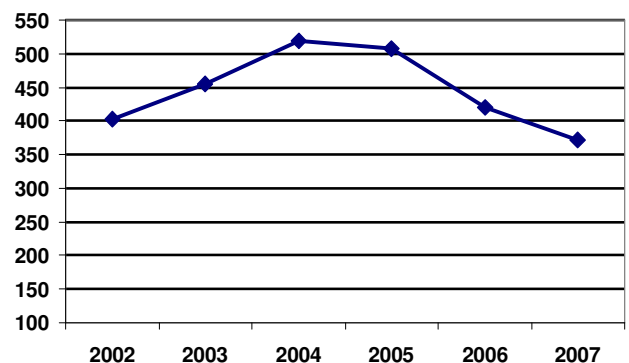
Children Under Age 6 Receiving TANF Benefits  
(August 2007)



South Carolina Children Under Age 6  
Receiving TANF Benefits  
2002-2007



Pickens County Children Under Age 6  
Receiving TANF Benefits  
2002-2007



# 2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

# Pickens County

Total Children Under Six: 7,727

## CHILDREN AT LOW BIRTH WEIGHT (Less Than 5.5 lbs.)

Statewide Average (2005): 10.2%

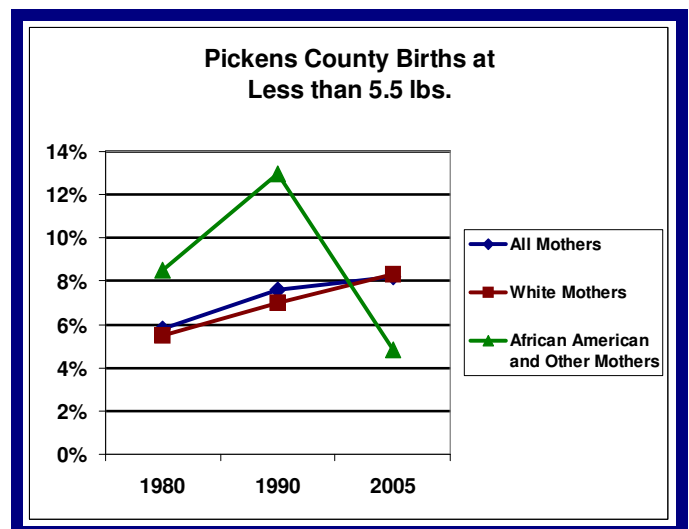
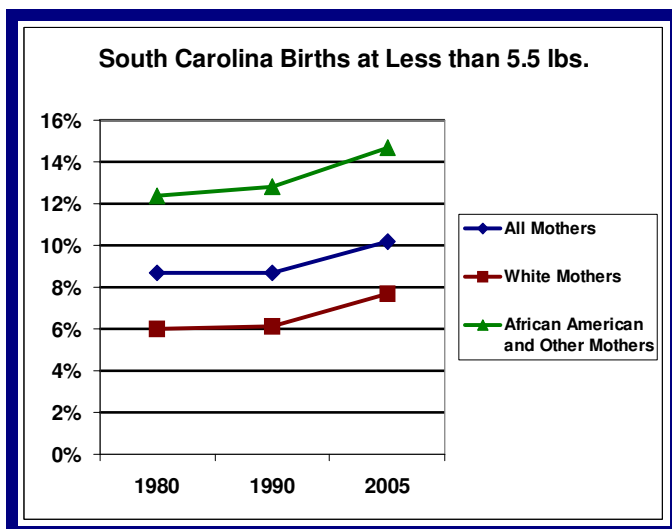
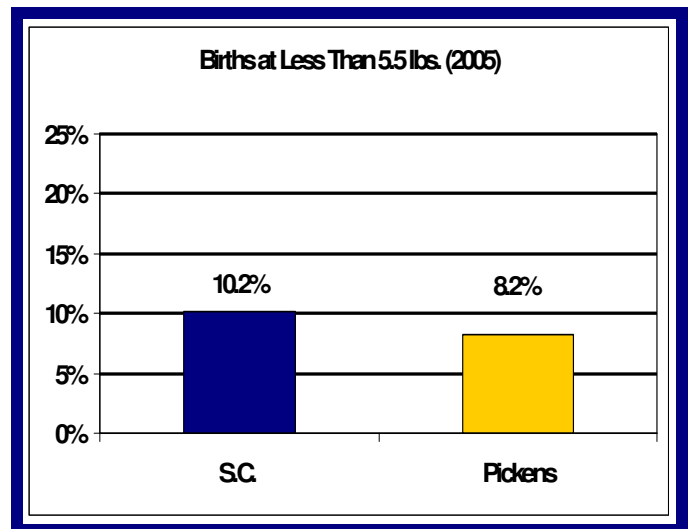
Pickens County (2005): 8.2%

***Fast Fact:*** Roughly 1 in 12 Pickens County children is born at a weight less than 5.5 lbs. A recent statewide analysis suggests that at least one-third of these children (36%-52% depending on weight category) will be retained or score at the “below basic” level (PACT) by third grade.

Babies born at low weights are often prone to developmental delays associated with early academic failure.

Many have received inadequate prenatal care and suffer from significant health complications.

107 of the 1,309 children born in Pickens County during 2005 weighed less than 5.5 lbs.





# 2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

# Pickens County

Total Children Under Six: 7,727

## BIRTHS TO TEENAGE MOTHERS

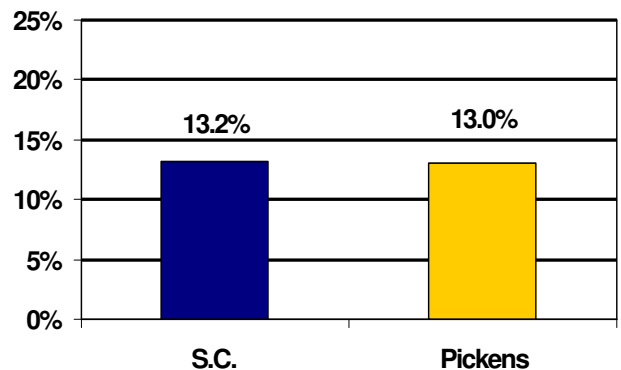
Statewide Average (2005): 13.2%      Pickens County (2005): 13.0%

**Fast Fact:** Just over 1 in 8 Pickens County births is to a mother under 20 years of age. A recent statewide analysis suggests that 43% of these children will be retained or score at the “below basic” level (PACT) by third grade.

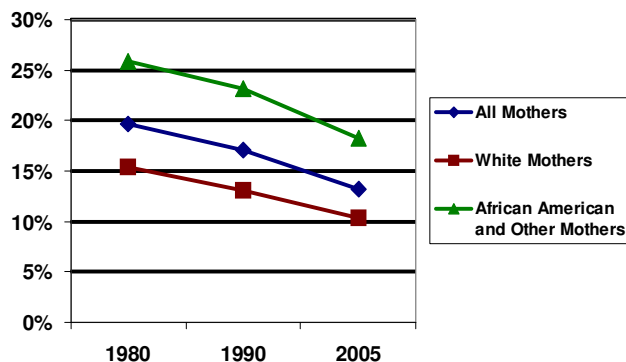
Teenage parents often lack the maturity and knowledge required to optimally fulfill important parental responsibilities, are less likely to advance their own educational attainment and often fail to advance beyond low-income status.

170 of the 1,309 children born in Pickens County during 2005 had teenage mothers.

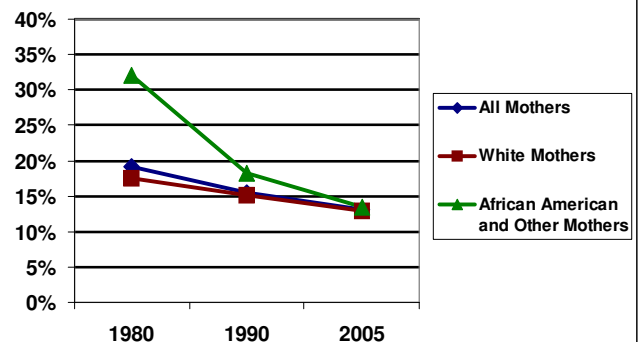
Births to Teenage Mothers (2005)



South Carolina Births to Teenage Mothers



Pickens County Births to Teenage Mothers



# 2008 School Readiness Risk Profile

# Pickens County

Total Children Under Six: 7,727

## BIRTHS TO MOTHERS WITH LESS THAN A HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Statewide Average (2005): 23.7%

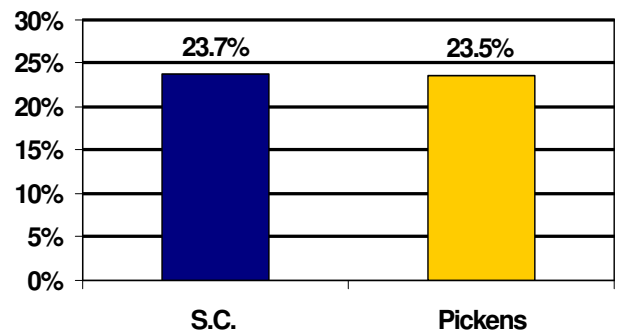
Pickens County (2005): 23.5%

**Fast Fact:** Nearly 1 in 4 children in Pickens County is born to a mother possessing less than a high school diploma. A recent statewide analysis suggests that roughly half (48%) of these children will be retained or score at the “below basic” level (PACT) by third grade.

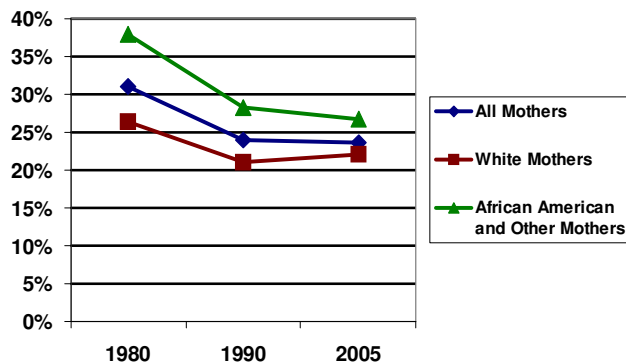
Research suggests that a mother’s own educational attainment is closely linked to the subsequent academic performance of her children.

308 of the 1,309 children born in Pickens County during 2005 had mothers with less than a high school diploma.

Births to Mothers with Less than a High School Diploma (2005)



SC Births to Mothers with Less than a High School Diploma



Pickens County Births to Mothers with Less than a High School Diploma

